

THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

FRAMEWORK FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE JUSTICE LAW AND ORDER SECTOR (JLOS) AND THE UGANDA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1. BACKGROUND

The Government of Uganda has established a legal and institutional framework to promote and protect human rights. In order to strengthen and improve on the administration of justice and maintenance of law and order, of which human rights promotion and protection is an integral part, Government of Uganda in 1999 adopted a sector wide approach – the Justice Law and Order Sector. The JLOS comprises over 10 public institutions directly involved in the administration of justice and maintenance of law and order.

The Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) is a Constitutional and independent national human rights institution established in 1996 to promote and protect human rights in Uganda. Whereas the UHRC does not constitute one of the JLOS institutions, its mandate and prioritized activities under its Corporate Plan are pertinent in informing the ongoing JLOS reforms.

The effort of Government to create and foster a conducive atmosphere within which the UHRC is able to monitor Government and hold it accountable on human rights is a priority area that the JLOS would like to harness during implementation of its Second Strategic Investment Plan with a view of fostering a human rights culture across all JLOS institutions.

This framework for cooperation is in recognition of the relevance and importance of strengthening the relationship between the Justice Law and Order Sector and the Uganda Human Rights Commission and collectively developing effective strategies in promoting and protecting human rights in Uganda.

2. BASIS UNDERPINNING THE COOPERATION

- i) A national justice strategy that is relevant and inclusive must address itself to cross-cutting issues of relevance, such as human rights that the UHRC is mandated to promote and protect; and which JLOS has identified as a cross cutting issue to address in its Second Strategic Investment Plan.

- ii) The approach to addressing cross-cutting issues is anchored on two pillars of mainstreaming and utilizing inter-sectoral linkages and collaboration. A key strategy of JLOS in implementation of its Second Strategic Investment Plan is to enhance inter-sectoral linkages, while the UHRC in its Cooperate Plan has prioritized developing collaborative partnerships.
- iii) The use of inter-sectoral collaboration and linkages will depend on how common objectives can best be pursued through existing mechanisms within both institutions and with external stakeholders. As such, the JLOS and the UHRC will liaise through existing fora and through structured mechanisms

3. PURPOSE OF COOPERATION

- i) To build synergy, by establishing and sustaining a permanent and structured process of communication, cooperation and coordination through which information is shared on matters related to human rights, justice, law and order
- ii) To ensure continued dialogue and sharing of experiences on priorities and programs, and to identify and maintain new areas of collaboration, including with other relevant partners.
- iii) To create and enhance accountability of the JLOS institutions
- iv) To generate innovative and cost effective strategies, options and activities to minimize occurrence of human rights violations
- v) To utilize the opportunity of comparative advantages necessary to limit duplication and enhance rationalization of resources

4. NATURE OF COOPERATION

The cooperation between the JLOS and the UHRC is not a legally binding relationship. This cooperation is anchored on the significance of the JLOS and the UHRC working together on the basis of mutual trust and commitment to promote and protect human rights in general, and to foster a human rights culture across JLOS institutions in particular.

While each party will meet its budgetary requirements translated from this cooperation, it does not limit nor is it a bar to sharing resources for the attainment of common activities.

The following principles will be observed during the cooperation:

- i) Mutual Respect and Understanding
- ii) Transparency and Accountability
- iii) Consultative and Participatory Decision Making
- iv) Maintenance of Autonomy of each party
- v) Commitment
- vi) Accuracy and reliability of information
- vii) Collective Responsibility

5. AREAS OF COOPERATION

i) Advocacy

The JLOS and the UHRC will work together, where appropriate, to advocate for human rights promotion and protection in all its forms and to encourage public participation in human rights prevention.

ii) Policy and Priority Setting

This cooperation will foster active and meaningful participation of the UHRC in influencing policy formulation on areas of human rights. The JLOS will consult and receive feedback from UHRC on policy and legislation related to or impacting on human rights.

iii) Capacity Building

Through this cooperation, capacity will be built in human rights and the rights based approach through training and sharing of technical human resource that is necessary to strengthen the ability of either party to attain their objectives.

iv) Civic Education

UHRC will work with JLOS to promote civic education in a coordinated manner in addressing the demand side of justice.

v) Law Reform

The UHRC will participate in the law reform and revision process by conducting human rights audits and implications on existing law and proposed bills.

vi) Monitoring and Evaluation

Through the UHRC oversight and monitoring function, the JLOS will link and feed into the preparation of the UHRC Annual Reports to Parliament to promote evidence based research and information for sharing, which will foster increased public access to quality and accurate information on human rights issues and the JLOS.

6. STRATEGY FOR COOPERATION

This cooperation will be effected through:

1. Annual meeting between JLOS Steering Committee and Members of the UHRC under the chairpersonship of the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
2. Structured meetings between JLOS and UHRC prior to and after issuance of its Annual Report to Parliament
3. UHRC representation and effective participation in JLOS at the Technical Committee
4. UHRC to attend all JLOS reviews and vice versa to ensure meaningful input and contribution to programs.
5. Exchange of reports and information
6. Joint activities such as capacity building programs
7. Structured and adhoc networking

This framework of cooperation may be reviewed and modified by mutual written understanding of the parties.

The official contact persons for this cooperation shall be the learned Solicitor General for the JLOS and the Chairperson of the UHRC for the UHRC.

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**Solicitor General
Chairperson, JLOS Steering Committee
Commission**

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**Chairperson,
Uganda Human Rights**